Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SAIGON 21474 270947Z

14
ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 PM-07 NSC-10 SPC-03 SS-20 RSC-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04 USIA-15 PRS-01

DPW-01 AID-20 OMB-01 IO-14 DRC-01 /148 W
---------- 098996
R 270840Z DEC 73
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 317
AMEMBASSY PARIS
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 21474

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: MOPS VS
SUBJ: HIGH LEVEL OF ACTIVITY IN THE DELTA CONTINUES, WITH
MAJOR AMBUSH OF ARVN BATTALION

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

HEREWITH REPEAT OF AMCONSUL CAN THO MESSAGE 901 ACTION AMEMB SAIGON INFO USSAG NKP RTAFB THAI, USDAO SAIGON RVN FYI/ACTION QUOTE

1. THE 3RD BATTALION OF THE 31ST REGIMENT, ARVN 21ST DIVISION SUFFERED A MAJOR AMBUSH AT THE HANDS OF THE 5TH AND 6TH BATTALIONS OF THE VC/NVA MAIN FORCE 18-B REGIMENT IN NORTHERN CHUONG THIEN, BEGINNING EARLY CHRISTMAS DAY.

2. IN A CLASSIC AMBUSH MANEUVER, THE ARVN BATTALION WAS MOVING NORTH, ABOUT FIVE KILOMETERS NORTHWEST OF VI THANH CITY TO RELIEVE A BELEAGURED OUTPOST IN NGOC HOA VILLAGE, DUC LONG DISTRICT, BETWEEN 0930 AND 1030 DECEMBER 25, WHEN IT RECEIVED HOSTILE ARTILLERY FIRE FROM THE REAR, THEN ENCOUNTERED AN AMBUSH TO THE FRONT (VICINITY OF WR 465895).

3. GVN LOSSES, ACCORDING TO CONFLICTING REPORTS, (CORPS AND IN
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PAGE 02 SAIGON 21474 270947Z

PROVINCE), INCLUDED 18 OR 29 KILLED, 69 OR 81 WOUNDED, AND 42

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

OR 59 MISSING. AMONG THE DEAD ARE THE BATTALION COMMANDER, TWO COMPANY COMMANDERS AND SIX OTHER OFFICERS. WEAPONS LOSSES INCLUDED AT LEAST FOUR CREW-SERVED WEAPONS, AND FORTY-SIX INDIVIDUAL WEAPONS. SEVEN PRC-25 RADIOS WERE LOST. MR IV CLAIMS 25 VC/NVA WERE KILLED, ONE CAPTURED; FOUR CREW-SERVED WEAPONS AND 16 INDIVIDUAL WEAPONS SEIZED.

4. FIGHTING CONTINUED THROUGHOUT DECEMBER 25 AND 26 IN THE AREA, AND, ACCORDING TO LATEST REPORTS, STILL CONTINUES ON DECEMBER 27.

5. PROVINCE, DIVISION AND CORPS SOURCES HAVE BEEN EXTREMELY RELUCTANT TO DISCUSS DETAILS WITH US CONTACTS.

6. CORPS-WIDE FIGURES FOR THE 24-HOUR PERIOD ENDING AT 0600 DECEMBER 27, WHICH PROBABLY INCLUDE MOST OF THE LOSSES ACTUALLY INCURRED IN CHUONG THIEN ON DECEMBER 25, INDICATE 61 VC/NVA INITIATED INCIDENTS, INCLUDING 11 GROUND ATTACKS, 35 ATTACKS BY FIRE AND 13 HARASSMENTS. GVN LOSSES ARE REPORTED AT 48 KILLED, 253 WOUNDED, 61 MISSING, 3 CREW-SERVED WEAPONS LOST AND 113 INDIVIDUAL WEAPONS LOST. CORPS CLAIMS 94 VC KILLED, AND 6 CREW-SERVED WEAPONS AND 29 INDIVIDUAL WEAPONS SEIZED.

7. THE HEAVY LOSSES OF THE 3RD BATTALION IS PART OF HIGHPOINT ACTIVITY NOW GOING INTO A SECOND WEEK IN THE DELTA. CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN GHUONG THIEN HAS BEEN ONE OF THE FOCAL AREAS OF VC/NVA ACTIVITY.
WRIGHT
UNQUOTE
MARTIN

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
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TAGS: MOPS, VS, VN
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